

Decision 03-03-024 March 13, 2003

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the Application of the City and County of San Francisco for Authority (i) to Construct a new Grade Crossing at the intersection of Common Street and the tracks of the Peninsula Joint Powers Board; (ii) to Reconstruct the existing 16th Street Grade Crossing of the tracks of Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board; (iii) to close the King Street Grade Crossing of the tracks of the Peninsula Joint Powers Board; and (iv) to close Berry Street Crossing of the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board.

Application 99-12-021
(Filed December 15, 1999;
Petition For Modification
filed February 11, 2002,
amended October 31, 2002)

ORDER MODIFYING DECISION 00-05-042

By Decision (D.) 00-05-042, dated May 18, 2000, in Application (A.) 99-12-021, the City and County of San Francisco (CCSF) was granted authority to construct Common Street at-grade over Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board's (JPB) mainline tracks, in the City and County of San Francisco.

On February 11, 2002 CCSF filed a Petition for Modification of D.00-05-042, requesting to substitute two Standard No. 9 automatic gates with flashing lights for the eastbound traffic lanes over the Common Street crossing in place of two Standard No. 9A automatic gates with cantilevered flashing lights. The petition also provides for installation of CCSF's vehicle traffic signals on the cantilever structure of the Standard No. 9A signal to be installed for the north and center lane of westbound traffic on Common Street. In addition, the petition substitutes

three Standard No. 9 automatic gates with flashing lights for the eastbound traffic lanes of 16th Street and the right-turn lane of Mississippi Street in place of three Standard No. 9A automatic gates with cantilevered flashing lights.

On October 31, 2002, CCSF filed an Amended Petition for Modification, wherein CCSF and the JPB request the same modifications named in the original petition for modification, and in addition propose to install, as a demonstration project, non-standard pedestrian warning devices over the single crosswalk at the Common Street crossing and for pedestrians proceeding against the traffic flow at the 16th Street crossing. These devices are to consist of automatic gates with vertically arranged flashing lights and a so-called "Calgary Gate" allowing pedestrians to exit from the track area of the crossing when the automatic gates are activated before the pedestrian has completed his or her crossing. The demonstration project is proposed to include periodic video monitoring of the effectiveness of these devices for a period of six months following opening of the crossing to traffic; and upon expiration of the six-month period, JPB will submit to the Commission a Crossing Warning Device Modification report.

The proposed changes were discussed with the Commission's Rail Crossings Engineering Section staff (RCES) in a series of meetings for evaluation of any impacts on safety. CCSF's main concern is the visibility of its traffic signals at the intersections adjacent to the two crossings. CCSF desires to install its traffic signals on cantilevered structures. This posed the possibility of visibility conflicts with the devices ordered by D.00-05-042. RCES required that the design standard of a pair of flashers per lane of travel for motorists be maintained. The standard was obtainable through the placement of mast-mounted flashers at the edge of the traveled roadways and in center medians at all but one location. For this location, westbound Common Street, it was agreed

that both traffic signals and railroad warning devices be mounted on a shared cantilevered structure. The Commission has approved similar installations at other locations (Vallejo and Oxnard).

The need for the vertical mounting of the flashers for the pedestrian gates arises from limited clearances due to the supports for State Route 280 directly over the crossings.

Notice of the Petition for Modification was published in the Commission's Daily Calendar on November 5, 2002. No protests have been received. A public hearing is not necessary.

This is an uncontested matter in which the decision grants the relief requested. Accordingly, pursuant to Public Utilities Code Section 311(g)(2), the otherwise applicable 30-day period for public review and comment is being waived.

Assignment of Proceeding

Richard Clark is the assigned Examiner in this proceeding.

Findings of Fact

1. CCSF requests authority to modify D.00-05-042 in A.99-12-021 by substituting two Standard No. 9 automatic gates with flashing lights for the eastbound traffic lanes over the Common Street crossing in place of two Standard No. 9A automatic gates with cantilevered flashing lights. The petition provides for installation of CCSF's vehicle traffic signals on the cantilever structure of the Standard No. 9A signal to be installed for the north and center lane of westbound traffic on Common Street. In addition, the petition substitutes three Standard No. 9 automatic gates with flashing lights for the eastbound traffic lanes of 16th Street and the right-turn lane of Mississippi Street in place of three Standard No. 9A automatic gates with cantilevered flashing lights. In

addition, CCSF and the JPB propose to install non-standard pedestrian warning devices, as a demonstration project. These devices are to consist of automatic gates with vertically arranged flashing lights.

2. CCSF, JPB, and RCES are in agreement with CCSF's proposal.

Conclusion of Law

The Petition for Modification of D.00-05-042 in A.99-12-021 should be granted as set forth in the following order.

IT IS ORDERED that:

1. The City and County of San Francisco (CCSF) is authorized to install two Standard No. 9 automatic gates with flashing lights for the eastbound traffic lanes over the Common Street crossing. CCSF is also authorized to provide for the installation of CCSF's vehicle traffic signals on the cantilever structure of the Standard No. 9A signal to be installed for the north and center lane of westbound traffic on Common Street. CCSF is also authorized to install three Standard No. 9 automatic gates with flashing lights for the eastbound traffic lanes of 16th Street and the right-turn lane of Mississippi Street, as set forth in Amended Petition for Modification of D.00-05-042, filed October 31, 2002.

2. CCSF is authorized to install non-standard pedestrian warning devices, as a demonstration project. These devices are to consist of automatic gates with vertically arranged flashing lights.

3. In all other respects, Decision 00-05-042, dated May 18, 2000, in Application (A.) 99-12-021 shall remain in full effect.

4. A.99-12-021 is closed.

This order is effective today.

Dated March 13, 2003, at San Francisco, California.

MICHAEL R. PEEVEY
President
CARL W. WOOD
LORETTA M. LYNCH
GEOFFREY F. BROWN
SUSAN P. KENNEDY
Commissioners